

NYLS' GOVERNOR'S BILL JACKET

**1958
CHAPTER 107**

24 PAGES

(NYLS added 4 pages)

PENAL LAW
Gravity Knives Ban

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1-14-54-5M (JOMO-1452)

CHAPTER *107*

2d Rdg. 27

Nos. 913, 1796

Int. 913

IN ASSEMBLY

January 9, 1958

E

Introduced by Mr. STEINGUT—read once and referred to the Committee on Codes—reported from said committee with amendments, ordered reprinted as amended and placed on the order of second reading

AN ACT

To amend the penal law, in relation to the sale or possession of gravity knives

Notes

Jurats and Enacting Clause

Compared by *Maurer, Connolly, Jeffers*

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY

Approved by *March 5, 1958*

MICROFILMED

DATE

NO. OF PRINTED BILLS

NO. OF EXPOSURES

EXCLUSIVE OF BILLS

Form No. 88-2000

State of New York

In Assembly

FEB 1

1958

Ordered, That the Clerk deliver the bill entitled

AN ACT

To amend the penal law, in relation to the sale or possession
of gravity knives

to the Senate, and request its concurrence in the same.

By order of the Assembly

ANSLEY B. BORKOWSKI

Clerk

IN SENATE
Passed Without Amendment

FEB 24 1958

By order of the SENATE

William P. Keith
SECRETARY



STANLEY STEINGUT
271 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

Mr. Walsh
RECEIVED

27 REC'D

COUSSEL TO THE GOVERNOR

February 26, 1958

hon. Daniel Cutman
Counsel to the Governor
Executive Chamber
Albany, N. Y.

Dear Dan:

My bill Assembly Introductory 913,
Print 1796, simply includes gravity knives
in Section 1896 which makes any person who
sells or has in his possession certain
dangerous weapons guilty of a misdemeanor.

The gravity knife has come into
being as a circumvention of this section and
is the successor of the switchblade knife.
The gravity knife is not violative of this
section and, therefore, it is imperative that
it be included.

Sincerely yours,

Stanley

STANLEY STEINGUT
Member of Assembly

SS:ak

FRANCIS S. MCGARVEY
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF NEW YORK



GEORGE M. SEARLE
DEPUTY
CHIEF INSPECTOR
MARTIN F. DILLON
CHIEF INSPECTOR

NEW YORK STATE TROOPERS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
DIVISION OF STATE POLICE
ALBANY

A 913 February 26, 1958.

Hon. Daniel Gutman,
Counsel to the Governor,
Executive Chamber,
Albany, N.Y.

Dear Judge Gutman:

This acknowledges your memorandum, enclosing Assembly Bill Print No. 913-1796 Int. 913, an act to amend the penal law, in relation to the sale or possession of gravity knives.

The proposed legislation deals with a technicality concerning a type of dangerous weapon and clarifies and reinforces existing law. The Division recommends approval.

Very truly yours,

Francis S. McGarvey

Francis S. McGarvey
Superintendent.

FSMcG/m.

PER

FEB 26 3 11 PM

NEW YORK



THOMAS J. McHUGH
COMMISSIONER

WILLIAM E. FLANIGAN
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

ALFRED E. SMITH STATE OFFICE BUILDING
ALBANY

WILLIAM E. LEONARD
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
CHARLES S. ANTOLINA
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
SOLOMON KAUFMAN
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

February 27, 1958

Re: An act to amend the penal law, in relation
to the sale or possession of gravity knives

Assembly Int. 913 - R. 913, 1796
Assemblyman Steingut - Introducer

A 913

Hon. Daniel Gutman
Counsel to the Governor
Executive Chamber
Albany, New York

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to your request for comment, please be
advised that this Department has no objection to the
approval of the above bill.

Very truly yours,

Solomon Kaufman
Deputy Commissioner

sk:hgj

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

1201

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter

NL = Night Letter

LT = International Letter Telegram

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.

SYD138

SY NNB753 NL PD=NEWYORK NY 27=

GOVERNOR W A HARRIMAN=

ALBANY NY=

1938 03 27 PM 8 18

ADVISED BILL REGARDING GRAVITY KNIVES PASSED SENATE
ASSEMBLY NOW AWAITING YOUR SIGNATURE OUR ASSOCIATION
URGES YOU SIGN=

QUEENS COUNTY GRAND JURORS ASSOCIATION INC
CLEMENS GRAFE=

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

March 4, 1958

My dear Mr. Grafe:

On behalf of Governor Harriman, I
acknowledge receipt of your recent communication
regarding the legislation concerning gravity
knives.

The Governor has asked me to thank
you for advising him as to your views in the
matter.

Cordially yours,

DG:sfb

Mr. Clemens Grafe, Queens County Grand Jurors Assoc.
Queens Medical Society Building
112-25 Queens Boulevard
Forest Hills 75, New York

Queens County Grand Jurors' Association, Inc.

NEW YORK

President

HERMAN C. HANSEN
166-33 69th Avenue
Jamaica 32, N. Y.
REpublic 9-3243

Vice-Presidents

EMIL J. HORN
HERMAN WEBER
VINCENT J. ASHTON

Counsel

FRANK M. NICOLISI



Organized 1925

Place of Meeting
QUEENS MEDICAL SOCIETY BUILDING
112-25 Queens Boulevard
Forest Hills 75, N. Y.

ROBERT ELLIOTT, JR., Treasurer
72-16 67th Place, Glendale 27, N. Y.
Tel. HEgeman 3-8393

STEPHEN F. SCHNEIDER, Secretary

53-29 62nd Street
Maspeth 78, N. Y.
Tel. HAvemeyer 9-4003

Legislation Committee

Clemens Grafe, Chairman
86-29 78 Street, Woodhaven 21, N. Y.

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CHARLES SCALA
*CHARLES H. SCHROEDER
*FRANCIS J. SORG
*THOMAS J. STYLES
*EMIL C. ZIMMERMANN

February 28, 1958

Governor Averell Harriman
State Capitol Building
Albany, New York.

Honorable Sir:

I am confirming on behalf of our Association the following telegram sent to you on yesterday's date.

"Advised bill regarding Gravity Knives passed Senate Assembly. Now awaiting your signature. Our Association urges you sign."

Due to the teenage problem at present prevalent in New York City the passage of the bill in our opinion will improve conditions in our City by its enforcement.

Your co-operation is enlisted in this matter and our Association would appreciate receiving your comments at your earliest convenience.

Anticipating your favorable reply.

Sincerely yours,

Clemens Grafe

Past Presidents

"The True Administration of Justice is the Firmest Pillar of Good Government."

MAR 3 4 44 PM 1958

March 6, 1958

My dear Mr. Grafe:

On behalf of Governor Harriman, I acknowledge your letter of February 28, 1958 concerning legislation outlawing the use of gravity knives.

You will be pleased to know that Governor Harriman approved this bill yesterday and it is now part of the laws of our state.

Cordially yours,

Mr. Clemens Grafe
Queens County Grand Jurors' Association, Inc.
86-29 78th Street
Woodhaven 21, New York

DE:WJV:ms

COMMITTEE TO BAN TEEN-AGE WEAPONS

STATE SEN. FRANK J. PINO
Vice Chairman

HON. JOHN E. CONE
Chairman

CITY COUNCILMAN JACK KRANIS
Vice Chairman

IN COOPERATION WITH
THE YOUTH SERVICE LEAGUE
HON. ALBERT M. LEAVITT, President

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Director, Youth Counseling Service,
Archdiocese of N. Y.
LOUIS GOLDSTEIN
Retired Justice, Kings County Court
GEORGE H. HEARN
City Councilman
ALEXANDER O. HESTERBERG
Tax Commissioner
HUIAN E. JACK
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NICHANIEL KAPLAN
Justice, Court of Domestic Relations
EDNA F. KELLY
Member of Congress
STEPHEN P. KENNEDY
Police Comm., City of New York
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City Councilman
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Surrogate's Court, Kings County
EMILIO MUNIZ
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District Attorney, Queens County
FRANK J. PINO
State Senator
REV. DANIEL M. POTTER
Protestant Council
REV. VINCENT J. POWELL
CJO Brooklyn Diocese
DR. EDWARD D. RE
Professor, St. John's Law School
ARTHUR J. ROGERS
Director of Community Relations,
New York City Youth Board
JOHN J. RYAN
Assemblyman
ARTHUR H. SCHREIER
JOSEPH T. SHARKEY
Majority Leader,
New York City Council
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District Attorney, Kings County
RABBI RALPH SILVERSTEIN
Temple Sinai
ABE STARK
President, New York City Council
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Justice, Court of Special Sessions
RALPH WHELAN
Executive Director,
New York City Youth Board
JOSEPH ZARETZKI
Minority Leader, State Senate
WOMEN'S DIVISION
NITA BEVELIN
MAXINE DUBRESTEIN
SYLVIA EPSTEIN
LEE SINGER
ROSE SINGER

The Committee seeks to:

- Outlaw the "gravity knife."
- Limit the sale of bullets in New York City.
- Establish a temporary Commission to help modernize the Sullivan Law.
- Ban the importation and shipment in interstate commerce of switchblade and gravity knives.

March 6, 1958

Dear Governor Waverman,

You will note on the petitions submitted to you by Judge Cone in support of the bill to outlaw the gravity knife the message to return to me on thousands of signatures (see enclosed sample).

I call this to your attention so you will consider the strength the Leagues of NYC might have if aroused to use it.

They are really a dedicated group with a sincere interest in our youth. I should like to be able to tell them that you helped us. Please give enclosed appeal your careful consideration.

Respectfully,
Eda Quinlan

COMMITTEE TO BAN TEEN-AGE WEAPONS

714 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

Circle 5-2570-1

HON. JOHN E. CONE
Chairman

STATE SENATOR FRANK J. PINO
Vice Chairman

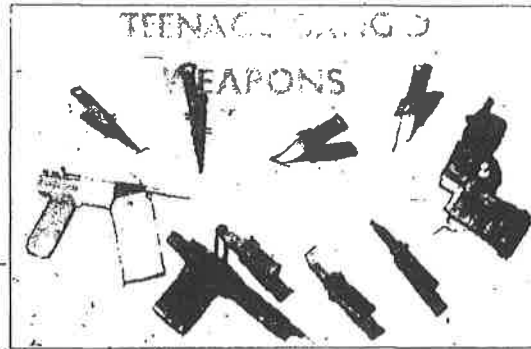
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Treasurer

CITY COUNCILMAN JACK KRANIS
Vice Chairman

MRS. NATHANIEL SINGER
Chairman, Women's Division

IN COOPERATION WITH
THE YOUTH SERVICE LEAGUE

HON. ALBERT M. LEAVITT, President



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Director, St. Vincent's Home for Boys

JOHN CASHMORE
Borough President, Brooklyn

ALFRED J. CAWSE, JR.
Justice, Court Special Sessions

ARTHUR CLINTON
Dir. Bureau of Attendance,
Board of Education

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Justice, N.Y.S. Supreme Court

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Chief Judge, Court of Spec. Sessions

JAMES CRISONA
Borough President, Queens

ANTHONY J. DI GIOVANNA
Justice, Supreme Court, Kings County

ROSS DI LORENZO
Counsel, Workman's Compensation

ROBERT W. DOWLING
President, City Investing Co.

JOHN GALARDI

REV. ROBERT GALLAGHER
Director, Youth Counseling Service
Archdiocese of N. Y.

HON. JONAH GOLDSTEIN
Retired Judge, Court General Sessions

LOUIS GOLDSTEIN
Retired Justice, Kings County Court

GEORGE H. HEARN
City Councilman

ALEXANDER G. HESTERBERG
Tax Commissioner

MORRIS HORN
Labor Representative

HULAN E. JACK
Borough President, Manhattan

NATHANIEL KAPLAN
Justice, Court of Domestic Relations

EDNA F. KELLY

STEPHEN P. KENNEDY
Police Comm., City of New York

ABRAHAM KRADITOR
Past Nat'l Comm. J.W.V.

JACK KRAVIS
City Councilman

ANNA M. KROSS
Commissioner, Dept. of Corrections
City of New York

ALBERT M. LEAVITT
Chief Clerk,
Surrogate's Court, Kings County

DR. JULIUS MARK
Senior Rabbi, Temple Emanu-El

EMILIO NUÑEZ
Justice, City Court

FRANK D. O'CONNOR
District Attorney, Queens County

FRANK J. PINO
State Senator

We the undersigned urge the following
legislative program to help ban teen-age
weapons:

- Outlaw the "gravity knife."
- Limit the sale of bullets in New York City.
- Establish a temporary Commission to help modernize the Sullivan Law.
- Ban the importation and shipment in interstate commerce of switchblade and gravity knives.

NAME	ADDRESS
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RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO:
RITA DEVELLIN
301 EAST 231. STREET
BROOKLYN 26, NEW YORK



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF LAW
ALBANY

LOUIS J. LEFKOWITZ
ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEMORANDUM FOR THE GOVERNOR

Re: Assembly Int. 913, Pr. 1796

This bill amends the Penal Law, Section 1896, which makes it a misdemeanor for a person to manufacture, sell, loan, lease or give a switchblade to any other person. The amendment similarly condemns the sale, loan or lease of gravity knives which are defined therein to be knives containing blades automatically opened by the force of gravity. Section 1897, subdivision 3, relating to the possession, is amended to permit the carrying of gravity knives in certain circumstances.

There is no legal objection to this bill.

Dated March 3, 1958

Respectfully submitted,

Louis J. Lefkowitz
LOUIS J. LEFKOWITZ
Attorney General

NYC 55-10M-120021 (58) 114

THE CITY OF NEW YORK



REPORT ON STATE LEGISLATION—APPROVED

Use a separate form for each bill. If necessary, continue on a blank sheet showing introductory and print numbers and pertinent item numbers.

Submit in Duplicate to Legislative Representative as follows:

Original to Room 1100, De Witt Clinton Hotel, Albany, N. Y.

Duplicate to Office of the Mayor, City Hall, New York 7, N. Y.

To: THE MAYOR
Att. The Legislative Representative

From: Reporting
Agency: POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. IDENTIFYING DATA (as printed on face of bill)

SENATE INT. NO.

PRINT NO.

INTRODUCER

ASSEMBLY INT. NO.

913

PRINT NO.

913, 1796

INTRODUCER

Steingut

TITLE OF THE BILL (Abbreviate if necessary) AN ACT to amend the penal law, in relation to the sale of possession of gravity knives.

2. ESTIMATED COST OR INCOME
(Indicate sum total of estimated mandated expenses, revenue losses or income to City)

Expenses or Loss

Income

3. STATUS OF THE BILL (as printed above bill's title or rubber stamped on bill)

IN COMMITTEE



ADVANCING ON CALENDAR



BEFORE THE GOVERNOR



4. EFFECT OF BILL AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

(a. Describe legal effect of the bill and outline reasons for your recommendations. b. Include detailed analysis of any estimate shown in Item 2. c. Cite introductory and print numbers of identical or similar bills of current and prior years reported on by your agency and its recommendations thereon.)

This proposal would amend Section 1896 and subdivision 3 of Section 1897 of the Penal Law. The bill defines as a misdemeanor the manufacture, sale or possession of a gravity knife and as a felony the possession of such a knife if previously convicted of any crime. The gravity knife is one which is released from the handle or sheath thereof by gravity or by the application of centrifugal force. When released, it is locked in place by means of a button, spring, lever or other device.

Under the present statutes covering dangerous and unlawful weapons, the switchblade knife is included therein while there is silence as to the gravity knife. There can be no doubt that the gravity knife is as much a hazard to the safety of the general public as the switchblade knife. Since it has been made unlawful to have and possess a switchblade knife, the gravity knife has been most attractive and useful to those engaged in criminal activity. The experience of this Department indicates that gravity knives are being used increasingly as weapons in the perpetration of such crimes as homicides, assault, rape and robbery. Naturally, since it is not unlawful to possess such a knife under present law, the person about to commit such heinous crimes has no fear of being apprehended with such knife in his possession. As a result, one of the deterrent factors in the prevention of serious crimes is lost.

NYC 55-10M-120021(58) 114

THE CITY OF NEW YORK



REPORT ON STATE LEGISLATION—APPROVED

Use a separate form for each bill. If necessary, continue on a blank sheet showing introductory and print numbers and pertinent item numbers.

Submit in Duplicate to Legislative Representative as follows:

Original to Room 1100, De Witt Clinton Hotel, Albany, N. Y.

Duplicate to Office of the Mayor, City Hall, New York 7, N. Y.

To: THE MAYOR
Att. The Legislative Representative

From: Reporting Agency POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. IDENTIFYING DATA (as printed on face of bill)

SENATE INT. NO.

PRINT NO.

INTRODUCER

ASSEMBLY INT. NO. 913

PRINT NO. 913, 1796, INTRODUCER Steingut

TITLE OF THE BILL (Abbreviate if necessary)

2. ESTIMATED COST OR INCOME
(Indicate sum total of estimated mandated expenses, revenue losses or income to City)

Expenses or Loss

Income

3. STATUS OF THE BILL (as printed above bill's title or rubber stamped on bill)

IN COMMITTEE ☐ADVANCING ON CALENDAR ☐BEFORE THE GOVERNOR ☒

4. EFFECT OF BILL AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

(a. Describe legal effect of the bill and outline reasons for your recommendations. b. Include detailed analysis of any estimate shown in Item 2. c. Cite introductory and print numbers of identical or similar bills of current and prior years reported on by your agency and its recommendations thereon.)

- 2 -

The gravity knife is inherently dangerous. To children and adults not versed in the use of such weapons, this knife can cause very serious injuries.

For the above reasons, this Department strongly urges the enactment of this proposal.

16

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICER

POLICE COMMISSIONER

TITLE

March 3, 1958

DATE

74

2

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MAR 4 2 50 PM 1998

ET

THE COUNCIL

Res. No. 8

Resolution Calling Upon the State Legislature to Pass Legislation Prohibiting the Sale of Gravity Knives.

By Mr. Kranis—

Whereas, State Legislation to ban the sale of gravity knives is the crying need in the City of New York; and

Whereas, Such legislation has been discussed by prominent people in public life and they have urged such legislation; and

Whereas, The public prosecutors of The City of New York have all campaigned for such legislation; and

Whereas, The manufacturing of such gravity knives and the sale of them to teenagers, increases crime and juvenile delinquency; and

Whereas, The 1952 Legislature had outlawed the sale of switchblade knives to persons under 16; and

Whereas, Such law had not prohibited the sale of such gravity knives and because of such omission in the 1952 law in not prohibiting the sale of gravity knives, find themselves in abundance in the hands of teenagers with resultant increase in crimes; and

Whereas, Such legislation against the sale of gravity knives would be an important factor in curtailing juvenile delinquency; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the City Council go on record to asking the State Legislature to pass such legislation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Governor of the State of New York urge the State Legislature to pass said legislation; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be sent to His Excellency, the Governor of the State of New York and the Majority and Minority Leaders of both houses.

The City of New York, {
Office of the City Clerk, { ss.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a
Resolution passed by The Council of The City of New York on
FEBRUARY 18, 1958 on file in this office.

City Clerk, Clerk of the Council.

GROUP SEEKS BAN ON GRAVITY KNIFE

Successor to Switchblade Is Called a New Tool of Teen-Age Crime

By EMMA HARRISON

The "gravity knife" was introduced here yesterday as the "legal" successor to the outlawed switchblade. The purpose was to announce a campaign to outlaw the gravity knife as a tool of teen-age crime.

Several of the knives, recently confiscated by the police, were shown by the new Committee to Ban Teen-age Weapons as it opened its drive for legislation to ban the knives. They were said to be flooding the city.

By a technicality in the construction of the knife, manufacturers and distributors are able to sell it with impunity here, said Supreme Court Justice John E. Cone, committee chair-

man. He was interviewed at the New Yorker Hotel.

Judge Cone selected a sleek, silverish object from weapons that the committee had on display. He flicked his wrist sharply downward and the long blade shot forth and anchored firmly in position.

"You see," he said, "the blade leaps out with a flip of the wrist and circumvents the law on switchblade knives. There is no button needed to open it."

The knife circumvents the state law banning the sale of the switchblade, which opens by a spring mechanism. The law was passed in 1954.

Teen-agers have become aware that the knife can be purchased legally and have openly chased the police when it has been found in their possession, Judge Cone reported. He said the knife was readily obtainable to all over the city.

Ralph Whelan, executive director of the Youth Board, declared "the easy purchase of these knives is a contributing factor to the increase in juvenile and youth crime in the city" and that they had figured in "many local laws were helpless against of the most vicious crimes by young people."

Judge Cone's knife demon-

stration was attended by committee members and other citizens pledged to sponsor or support several types of legislation to outlaw the knife and other weapons used by youngsters. They announced the following legislative program for state, city and national action:

qA state law to outlaw the gravity knife.

qA state law making it unlawful to sell or give away any ammunition in New York City without the recipient's showing of a gun permit, hunting license or authorization from a national rifle association.

qA measure to create a temporary state commission to study and recommend revision of the Sullivan Law relating to dangerous weapons, to eliminate "contradictory and outmoded provisions" and accurately to redefine dangerous weapons.

qFederal legislation to prohibit interstate traffic in switchblade and gravity knives. It was estimated that 1,000,000 switchblade and gravity knives were either sold in or brought into the city yearly, and that many local laws were helpless against mail order purchases of the switchblade.

Representatives Edna F. Kelly

and Victor L. Anfuso, Brooklyn Democrat-Liberals, will introduce the Federal legislation.

Senate minority leader Joseph Zaretzki and Assemblyman Stanley Steingut, both Democrats, will sponsor the bill to outlaw the gravity knife. Senator Frank J. Pino and Assemblyman John J. Ryan, also Democrats, will sponsor measures to limit sale of ammunition and to establish the temporary commission.

The committee is composed of about 100 public officials and civic, welfare and religious leaders.

The New York Times

Published: December 19, 1957

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THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN ADDED BY
NY LEGISLATIVE SERVICE, INC.

IT IS NOT CONTAINED IN THE
GOVERNMENT FILE, HOWEVER, WE
FEEL THAT IT MAY BE HELPFUL

COURT BANS SALES OF GRAVITY KNIVES

The Court of Special Sessions ruled yesterday that gravity knives were in the same category as switchblade knives, and their sale or possession was a violation of the Sullivan law.

A gravity knife is one with a button that keeps the blade concealed. When the button is pushed, disengaging the blade, a flip of the wrist or simply holding the knife pointed down will set the blade in place for cutting.

After the outlawing of switchblade knives, which operate with a spring mechanism, some hoodlums took to carrying gravity knives.

The ruling, handed down by Justices Edward T. Galloway, John V. Flood and Magistrate J. Randall Creel, who is sitting in Special Sessions temporarily, came in the case of a novelty store salesman.

The salesman, Terry Powell, 25 years old, of 305 East Twenty-fourth Street, was arrested last May in the Funny Store, Inc., at 1481 Broadway. He had sold a gravity knife to Detective Nardin Duncan. He was found guilty of violating the section of the law banning switchblade knives. He will be sentenced on March 12.

On Tuesday the City Council appointed a special committee to make recommendations concerning legislation designed to tighten control over the sale of dangerous weapons and ammunitions. One of the matters on the committee's agenda for discussion at its meeting on Monday is the gravity knife.

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN ADDED BY
NY LEGISLATIVE SERVICE, INC.
IT IS NOT CONTAINED IN THE
GOVERNMENT FILE, HOWEVER, WE
FEEL THAT IT MAY BE HELPFUL.

The New York Times

Published: February 6, 1958

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Ban Asked on Teen-Agers' Weapons



The New York Times
Police Commissioner Stephen P. Kennedy, left, and Grover A. Whalen, a former Commissioner, examine a zipgun.

A committee of public officials and private citizens began a campaign yesterday for 250,000 signatures to petitions for outlawing the gravity knife and the sale of ammunition to anyone except a licensed hunter.

The drive was begun by the Committee to Ban Teen-Age Weapons at its new headquarters, 714 Fifth Avenue. The legislation is aimed at young hoodlums in New York, but enactment by city, state and nation was felt to be necessary. Bills have been introduced into the City Council, Legislature and Congress. The gravity knife is one in which

a long blade slides by its own weight out of a hollow handle and locks in place. It became popular among young gangsters after the switch-blade knife was outlawed in 1954. A Special Sessions court ruling on Wednesday held that the sale of gravity knives was illegal under the Sullivan Law.

The proposed ban on ammunition is intended primarily to stop the sale of .22-caliber cartridges to boys who shoot them from homemade guns.

Police Commissioner Stephen P. Kennedy said the proposed legislation would be "helpful" although not the final answer.

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HIGHER AGE LIMIT FOR ARMS IS URGED

Kennedy Asks State to Raise
Minimum for Purchase of
Weapons From 16 to 18

The state's Penal Law should be revised to raise from 16 to 18 years the age of persons permitted to purchase firearms and ammunition, Police Commissioner Stephen P. Kennedy declared yesterday.

The Commissioner said adoption of the higher age limit would "provide leadership to other states, particularly those contiguous to New York."

Mr. Kennedy gave his views in an appearance at City Hall before a hearing of a City Council committee. The hearing was on proposals before the Council to seek a state legislative ban on the sale of .22-caliber bullets to teen-agers and on the sale of gravity knives altogether.

A gravity knife is one in which a long blade slides by its own weight out of a hollow handle and locks in place.

The Police Commissioner was one of nine speakers favoring the ban. Five persons opposed it.

Mr. Kennedy called gravity knives "dangerous" and said they should be specifically banned by law. A Special Sessions Court ruling last Wednesday held that the sale of gravity knives was illegal under the Sullivan Law.

The Commissioner conceded that .22-caliber bullets should be available to authorized persons, such as members of rifle clubs, but said that some means of identifying authorized purchasers should be established.

Proposed Ban Scored

The suggested ban on .22-caliber bullets and gravity knives was, however, ridiculed by persons who opposed it.

Karl Frederick, former president of the National Rifle Association and winner of the individual pistol title at the 1920 Olympics in Antwerp, declared that the proposed ban would "disarm the honest people for the benefit of the crook."

The ban, Mr. Frederick asserted, could lead ultimately to prohibiting baseball bats, stones, sticks and kitchen cutlery as dangerous weapons.

Mr. Frederick, a lawyer of Rye, N. Y., and a member of the Commissioner's Advisory Committee of the State Conservation Department, said he had heard that young hoodlums had sometimes used can openers.

"Are you going to ban can openers?" he asked. "They are a very ugly weapon."

According to Mr. Frederick, gravity knives offer convenience to hunters, who can open them with one hand.

Speakers in favor of the proposed ban included Mrs. Nathaniel Singer, women's division chairman of the Committee to Ban Teen-Age Weapons, and James B. McCarthy, executive director of Big Brothers, Inc.

Mr. McCarthy declared that "more New York City youngsters are killed by .22 bullets than by any other."

Two resolutions were the subject of the hearing. One would call on the Legislature to outlaw the sale of gravity knives to persons under 16. The other would call for a ban on the sale of .22-caliber ammunition to teen-agers as "an important factor in curbing juvenile delinquency."

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